

Amendments to the Claims

This listing of claims will replace all prior versions, and listings, of claims in the application:

Listing of Claims

1-105. (Cancelled)

106. (Previously presented) A dispensing assembly to be coupled to a resilient-walled vessel containing a liquid, comprising:

a neck portion including a sidewall structured to engage an interior wall of a resilient-walled vessel containing a liquid;

a tip distally extending from the neck portion, including a distal end and defining a bore positioned to be in direct communication with an interior of a resilient-walled vessel containing a liquid when coupled to a resilient-walled vessel containing a liquid to provide a linear fluid flow path from an interior of a resilient-walled vessel containing a liquid to the distal end of the tip; and

a valve provided at the distal end of the tip, the valve extending substantially coaxially with the bore;

wherein the valve is structured to allow drop-wise liquid dispensing from a resilient-walled vessel containing a liquid when the assembly is coupled to a resilient-walled vessel containing a liquid and sufficient manual pressure is applied to a resilient-walled vessel containing a liquid, and to prevent liquid back flow at zero pressure differential and near zero pressure differentials across the valve.

107. (Previously presented) The dispensing assembly of claim 106, further comprising:

at least one vent opening structured to allow air into and out of a resilient-wall vessel containing a liquid when the dispensing assembly is coupled to a resilient-wall vessel containing a liquid; and

at least one filtration element extending across the at least one vent opening and structured to allow gaseous fluids to pass through the vent opening while blocking liquid fluids and contaminants.

108. (Previously presented) The dispensing assembly of claim 107, wherein the at least one vent opening is oriented at a substantially perpendicular angle to the bore of the tip.

109. (Previously presented) The dispensing assembly of claim 107, wherein the at least one vent opening is oriented coaxially with the bore of the tip.

110. (Previously presented) The dispensing assembly of claim 107, further comprising a retaining member structured and positioned to maintain the at least one filtration element in a fixed position.

111. (Previously presented) The dispensing assembly of claim 106, wherein the valve comprises a distal surface, at least one slit extending through the distal surface and a plurality of mutually facing surfaces extending along opposing sides of the at least one slit, the plurality of mutually facing surfaces being structured to exert sufficient force on one another when

the valve is closed to prevent microbe-sized particles from passing through the at least one slit when the valve is closed.

112. (Previously presented) The dispensing assembly of claim 111, wherein the plurality of mutually facing surfaces are structured to exert sufficient force on one another to prevent particles larger than 0.22 microns in diameter from passing through the at least one slit when the valve is closed.

113. (Previously presented) The dispensing assembly of claim 106, further comprising a cap structured to cover the tip when the assembly is not in dispensing use.

114. (Previously presented) The dispensing assembly of claim 113, further comprising an anti-microbial liner in the cap.

115. (Previously presented) The dispensing assembly of claim 106, wherein the tip is an over-molded elastomeric nozzle coupled to the neck portion, and the assembly further comprises at least one vent opening located in the neck portion structured to allow air into and out of a resilient-wall vessel containing a liquid when the dispensing tip is coupled to a resilient-wall vessel containing a liquid, and at least one co-molded filtration member extending across the at least one vent opening and structured to allow gaseous fluids to pass through the vent opening while blocking liquid fluid and contaminants.

116. (Previously presented) The dispensing assembly of claim 106, wherein the neck portion is formed of a first material, and the tip is formed of a second material more flexible than the first material.

117. (Currently amended) The dispensing assembly of claim [[14]] 116, wherein the first material is selected from the group consisting of polyethylene, polypropylene, polystyrene, polycarbonate, and acrylonitrile-butadiene-styrene polymers, and mixtures thereof, and the second material is selected from the group consisting of silicone, polyisoprene, plasticized polyvinyl chloride, polyurethane, ethylene-butylene copolymers, and mixtures thereof.

118. (Previously presented) The dispensing assembly of claim 106, further comprising a filtration member, wherein the neck portion, the tip, and the filtration member are coupled together as a unitary structure to be coupled to a resilient-walled vessel containing a liquid.

119. (Previously presented) The dispensing assembly of claim 106, wherein the bore of the tip provides an unobstructed linear fluid flow path from an interior of a resilient-walled vessel containing a liquid to the distal end of the tip when coupled to a resilient-walled vessel containing a liquid.

120. (Previously presented) The dispensing assembly of claim 106, wherein the valve is a check valve having a cracking pressure greater than 0.1 psi.

121. (Previously presented) The dispensing assembly of claim 106, wherein the distal end of the tip has a diameter, and the valve comprises a slit formed in the distal end, the slit having a length less than the diameter of the distal end of the tip.

122. (Previously presented) The dispensing assembly of claim 106, further comprising at least one deflector element structured to deflect liquid away from the at least one vent opening.

123. (Previously presented) The dispensing assembly of claim 106 coupled to a resilient-walled vessel containing a liquid.

124. (Previously presented) A method of dispensing a preservative-free solution, comprising:

providing a preservative-free liquid in a resilient-walled vessel comprising the dispensing assembly of claim 106;

applying sufficient manual pressure to the vessel to dispense a single drop of the liquid; and

immediately thereafter removing the manual pressure to close the valve.